

Today's News - Wednesday, December 16, 2015

- It's a Zaha kind of day: Two designs in the running to replace hers for the 2020 Tokyo Olympic stadium are already being blasted for being "boring, mediocre Japanese designs" - no official word of who the architects are, but word has it that it's Kuma and Ito.
- Her massive Mariners Cove development in Australia has the neighboring Sea World making waves that "could cause some support to be withdrawn."
- On a brighter note, AN offers a great Q&A with the Grande Dame re: drawing, her High Line project in NYC, and the Chicago Biennial: it's "a strong reminder that regardless of any controversy, her influence is epic and expanding."
- Wainwright and Ulmanu take an in-depth (and totally fascinating) look at the "tortured heap of towers" looking to shape the "London skyline of tomorrow. Besides blocking the sky, there will be consequences on the ground" (with great graphics - a must-read!).
- Perhaps London officials (and those in every other city) should sit down with a copy of Smart Growth America's newly-released "ReBuilding Downtown: A Guidebook for Revitalization" that deals with equitable development: "It ends the same way it begins - with community engagement."
- Jervis ponders whether Assemble's Turner Prize might be "a poisoned chalice": "one humble request: please no 'experimental pavilions' at design fairs, architectural biennials or art galleries - that way lies the path to closeted irrelevance."
- Betsky makes the case for "crunchy architecture": "It is the opposite of the kind of slick, bland, and anonymous forms in which most of us are imprisoned every day" (sounds very Assemble-ish to us).
- Brownell parses the COP21 Paris climate summit, and "where the AEC sector stands": "two audacious targets for sustainable design are just the beginning of the radical innovation we can bring to the designed environment."
- Anderton and Artsy line up impressive rosters of experts who discuss the "growing jitters about public gathering" and how it might "impact the design of civic space"; and whether Los Angeles can ever be water self-sufficient.
- Zeiger explains why Orange Coast College's expansion plans paint a "grim" future for several notable structures by Neutra and Alexander, and "also destroy a historic landscape design by Eckbo"; Alan Hess weighs in, too.
- Plans for a WW1 memorial in D.C.'s Pershing Park "encounter roadblocks": "comments from Commission of Fine Arts members ranged from disappointment to outright rebuke" ("Sometimes juries shouldn't pick anybody").
- Meanwhile, Sydney selects a subtle and touching memorial design for the siege of the Lindt Café on Martin Place.
- Brooklyn's Atlantic Yards/Pacific Park complex unveils the next tower, dubbed B15.
- Georgia State University's new College of Law building is the university's first to achieve LEED certification.
- Kamin reports that Lohan Anderson is closing its doors to join Wight & Co.
- Azure magazine picks the 10 Best Buildings of 2015: "it's been a good year for every building typology" + The 10 Best Cultural Buildings of 2015 "bring out the best in ambitious architects."
- Call for entries (deadlines loom!): Charlie Hebdo Portable Pavilion + Call for Papers: 2016 AIBC Annual Conference: Building A Resilient Future, in Vancouver next May.

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Critics slam Japan's shortlisted Olympic stadium designs: The two short-listed designs for the new national stadium that will serve as the centre-piece of the 2020 Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games have been lambasted as "boring," while the winner of the original competition has been "shafted" and her vision "replaced by mediocre Japanese designs"...architects have not been revealed, but...believed to have been submitted by Kengo Kuma [and] Toyo Ito. -- Zaha Hadid [images]- South China Morning Post

Sea World opposes Zaha Hadid towers' seal of approval: ...submitted a letter of objection against the Mariners Cove development on the Gold Coast... claims the proposed \$600 million twin tower complex...will contribute an "extreme" traffic load to the area...objection from Sea World could cause some support to be withdrawn. [images]- ArchitectureAU (Australia)

Q+A> Zaha Hadid: AN sits down with Zaha Hadid after her lecture in Chicago to discuss the importance of drawing, her first building in New York, and her thoughts on the Chicago Architecture Biennial: It was a strong reminder that regardless of any controversy, her influence is epic and expanding.- The Architect's Newspaper

A tortured heap of towers: the London skyline of tomorrow: The ley lines, the hallowed dome of St Paul's, packs of hungry dogs - and a tipsy surveyor in the 1930s ... these are the invisible forces shaping the City's skyline: Besides blocking the sky, there will be consequences on the ground. By Oliver Wainwright and Monica Ulmanu -- Eric Parry; Foggo Associates; Kohn Pedersen Fox (KPF); Wilkinson Eyre [images]- Guardian (UK)

In Downtown Revitalization, Equity Can Equal Authenticity: Elected officials...are the target audience of "ReBuilding Downtown: A Guidebook for Revitalization," released by Smart Growth America...equitable development still isn't guaranteed in denser, more walkable downtowns, but it's got a better chance if elected officials make it an explicit part of their vision and goals...It ends the same way it begins - with community engagement. By Oscar Perry Abello- Next City (formerly Next American City)

Turner Prize: A poisoned chalice for Assemble? Architecture's frenzied courtship with art has finally reached fruition, but...this relationship may already have done more harm than good: ...achievements should not be hijacked or overhyped, either as weighty political gestures or as a groundbreaking innovation...community architecture of the 1960s and 1970s would give the lie to such claims...one humble request: please no "experimental pavilions" at design fairs, architectural biennials or art galleries - that way lies the path to closeted irrelevance. By John Jervis- Icon (UK)

Crunch Time for Architecture: ...the case for crunchiness in the resurgence of older architecture used in new ways: Crunchy architecture is architecture that exhibits and frames reality, that is gritty, open, and has some meat to it. It does away with the opposition between new and old, as it delights in renovation, addition, and hybrids in time and form. It is the opposite of the kind of slick, bland, and anonymous forms in which most of us are imprisoned every day. By Aaron Betsky- Architect Magazine

The Promise of Radical Innovation in Sustainable Design: The recent climate summit in Paris talked a big game for energy reduction in the built environment, but critics say it's time for action. Here's where the AEC sector stands: ...two audacious targets for sustainable design, which set absolute goals for energy and materials in holistic terms, are just the beginning of the radical innovation we can bring to the designed environment. By Blaine Brownell- Architect Magazine

Fear and Public Space; Can LA Be Water Self-Sufficient? Recent shootings in Paris, Colorado and San Bernardino have added to growing jitters about public gathering. Will this impact the design of civic space? Do architecture, planning and technology have a role to play in accommodating these fears? + El Niño is coming but will we save the rain? By Frances Anderton and Avishay Artsy -- Susan Silberberg/Civic Moxie/MIT; Wade Graham/Pepperdine University; Doug Suisman [audio]- KCRW (Los Angeles)

Orange Coast College expansion threatens designs by Neutra, Alexander, and Eckbo: The future's looking grim for a dozen buildings...designed by Richard Neutra and Robert Alexander...trustees approved a plan for the demolition of several structures...including Neutra's planetarium...scheme would also destroy a historic landscape design by Garrett Eckbo... By Mimi Zeiger- The Architect's Newspaper

Plans to Erase Pershing Park Encounter Roadblocks: Designs for a new World War I memorial received tepid (at best) receptions from the Commission of Fine Arts and the National Capital Planning Commission...None of the members expressed support for any of the designs; to the contrary, comments from CFA members ranged from disappointment to outright rebuke..."Sometimes juries shouldn't pick anybody"... -- M. Paul Friedberg; Oehme, van Sweden & Associates - The Cultural Landscape Foundation (TCLF)

Richard Johnson's Martin Place memorial design chosen: ...inspired by the mounds of flowers that were left by the public in the days following the siege, and also accommodates Martin Place's function as a busy pedestrian thoroughfare. "Hundreds of floral cubes will be inlaid into the granite pavings...in a scattered starburst pattern. At night they will shine with specialized lighting." -- Pilton Johnson Walker [images]- ArchitectureAU (Australia)

Design for Atlantic Yards Tower School Unveiled: As work begins on a sixth residential tower at the Atlantic Yards/Pacific Park complex, locals are getting a first glimpse of the 26-story building and the public school...[at] 664 Pacific Street...known as tower "B15"...Five other buildings under construction or set to be built... -- Marvel Architects; COOKFOX; Kohn Pedersen Fox (KPF); SHoP Architects [image]- DNAinfo New York

New Georgia State University College of Law Building Encourages Interaction: ...the university's first facility to achieve LEED certification. -- Stevens & Wilkinson; SmithGroupJJR [images]- Facility Executive

Dirk Lohan's firm closing; he and staff to join Wight & Co.: Lohan and his partner, Floyd Anderson, will head a list of 10 people from their eponymous firm...[He] will lead a new section of the firm called the Lohan Studio. By Blair Kamin -- Lohan Anderson-Chicago Tribune

The 10 Best Buildings of 2015: From Heatherwick Studio's campus hub shaped like a stack of dim sum baskets to Herzog & deMeuron's all-white soccer stadium in Bordeaux, it's been a good year for every building typology. -- OMA; Jakob + Macfarlane; MASS Design Group; UNStudio; Rafael Viñoly Architects; Snøhetta/Zeidler Partnership Architects; Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners; Renzo Piano Building Workshop [images]- Azure magazine (Canada)

The 10 Best Cultural Buildings of 2015: Museums and galleries bring out the best in ambitious architects. -- Renzo Piano; Pattersons; David Adjaye; Diller Scofidio + Renfro; Toshiko Mori; Studio Odile Decq/Hassell; OMA; Baukuh; Zaha Hadid; Périphériques Architectes [images]- Azure magazine (Canada)

Call for entries: Charlie Hebdo Portable Pavilion: will enable exhibitions on the importance of free speech to travel the world; cash prizes; earlybird registration deadline: January 13; final registration: March 9 (submissions due: March 23)- Bee Breeders (formerly HMMD/Homemade Dessert)

Call for entries: Call for Papers: 2016 AIBC Annual Conference: Building A Resilient Future, Vancouver, May 16 - 18, 2016; deadline: January 15, 2016- Architectural Institute of British Columbia (AIBC)



Emre Arolat Architects: Sancaklar Mosque, Istanbul, Turkey: The high walls surrounding the park...depicts a clear boundary between the chaotic outer world, and the serene atmosphere of the public park...Women are separated from the men by a perforated metal screen. This is the first time in mosque architecture women can pray in the same row as the men. By Kirsten Kiser [images]

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